

National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP)

MENU PLANNING FOR SHORTER OR LONGER WEEKS

The meal patterns for the NSLP and SBP are based on a five-day week. When a school week **regularly** operates on a shorter or longer cycle, menu planners must increase or decrease the weekly requirements by 20 percent for each day that deviates from the standard five-day week. For the vegetables component, adjustments are made only to the “additional vegetables” category. Due to the smaller size of the weekly vegetable subgroup requirements, the 20 percent adjustment is not practical for the five vegetable subgroups.

The daily requirements and dietary specifications are unaffected by a longer or shorter week. Since the dietary specifications are daily averages, either fewer or more days are averaged together to meet the specified targets for calories, saturated fat and sodium.

Schools with **occasional** decreases in the school week due to holidays, snow days or other reasons are not required to adjust the weekly requirements. However, menus must be consistent with the intent of the meal patterns. For example, menu planners must ensure that they do not consistently fail to offer certain vegetable subgroups.

Dietary specifications are the USDA's nutrition standards for meals in the NSLP and SBP. The dietary specifications include weekly calorie ranges and limits for saturated fat and sodium. In addition, nutrition facts labels and manufacturer specifications must indicate zero grams of trans fat per serving for all food products and ingredients used to prepare school meals.

The charts below summarize these requirements. All amounts are rounded to the nearest ½ ounce equivalent (oz eq) and ¼ cup.

WEEKLY REQUIREMENTS AT LUNCH

Components	Three-day School Week for Lunch		
	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Fruits (cups)	1.5	1.5	3
Vegetables (cups)	2.25	2.25	3
Dark Green	0.5	0.5	0.5
Red/Orange	0.5	0.5	1
Beans/Peas (Legumes)	0.5	0.5	0.5
Starchy	0.5	0.5	0.5
Other	0.25	0.25	0.5
Additional Vegetables to Reach Total	0	0	0
Grains (oz eq)	5-5.5	5-6	6-7
Meats/Meat Alternates (oz eq)	5-6	5.5-6	6-7
Fluid Milk (cups)	3	3	3

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WEEKLY REQUIREMENTS AT LUNCH, continued

Components	Four-day School Week for Lunch		
	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Fruits (cups)	2	2	4
Vegetables (cups)	3	3	4
Dark Green	0.5	0.5	0.5
Red/Orange	0.75	0.75	1.25
Beans/Peas (Legumes)	0.5	0.5	0.5
Starchy	0.5	0.5	0.5
Other	0.5	0.5	0.75
Additional Vegetables to Reach Total	0.25	0.25	0.5
Grains (oz eq)	6.5-7	6.5-8	8-9.5
Meats/Meat Alternates (oz eq)	6.5-8	7-8	8-9.5
Fluid Milk (cups)	4	4	4

Components	Six-day School Week for Lunch		
	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Fruits (cups)	3	3	6
Vegetables (cups)	4.5	4.5	6
Dark Green	0.5	0.5	0.5
Red/Orange	0.75	0.75	1.25
Beans/Peas (Legumes)	0.5	0.5	0.5
Starchy	0.5	0.5	0.5
Other	0.5	0.5	0.75
Additional Vegetables to Reach Total	1.75	1.75	2.5
Grains (oz eq)	9.5-11	9.5-12	12-14.5
Meats/Meat Alternates (oz eq)	9.5-12	11-12	12-14.5
Fluid Milk (cups)	6	6	6

Components	Seven-day School Week for Lunch		
	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Fruits (cups)	3.5	3.5	7
Vegetables (cups)	5.25	5.25	7
Dark Green	0.5	0.5	0.5
Red/Orange	0.75	0.75	1.25
Beans/Peas (Legumes)	0.5	0.5	0.5
Starchy	0.5	0.5	0.5
Other	0.5	0.5	0.75
Additional Vegetables to Reach Total	2.5	2.5	3.5
Grains (oz eq)	11-12.5	11-14	14-17
Meats/Meat Alternates (oz eq)	11-14	12.5-14	14-17
Fluid Milk (cups)	7	7	7

WEEKLY REQUIREMENTS AT BREAKFAST

Components	Three-day School Week for Breakfast		
	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Fruits (cups) *	3	3	3
Grains (oz eq)	4-6	5-6	5.5-6
Fluid Milk (cups)	3	3	3

Components	Four-day School Week for Breakfast		
	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Fruits (cups) *	4	4	4
Grains (oz eq)	5.5-8	6.5-8	7-8
Fluid Milk (cups)	4	4	4

Components	Six-day School Week for Breakfast		
	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Fruits (cups) *	6	6	6
Grains (oz eq)	8.5-12	9.5-12	11-12
Fluid Milk (cups)	6	6	6

Components	Seven-day School Week for Breakfast		
	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Fruits (cups) *	7	7	7
Grains (oz eq)	10-14	11-14	12.5-14
Fluid Milk (cups)	7	7	7

* The weekly amounts for fruits were effective July 1, 2014, when the “juice/fruit/vegetable” component became the fruits component and the daily portion size for fruit increased from ½ cup to “1 cup. For school year 2013-14, the weekly amount for the “juice/fruit/vegetable” component was 3 ½ cups for seven-day weeks.

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For more information on the NSLP and SBP meal patterns, see the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#) and [Meal Patterns](#) Web page or contact the [school nutrition programs staff](#) in the CSDE Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, 25 Industrial Park Road, Middletown, CT 06457.

This handout is available at www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/nslp/weekly_adjustments.pdf.

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